Deviation of Indian Almanacs from Astronomical Parametres

2492. SHRI DHULESHWAR MEENA:
SHRI P. UPENDRA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item in 'The Hindu', Delhi Edition of 14th February, 1992 captioned 'Indian almanacs not in line with astronomical parametres';

(b) whether it is a fact that a recent seminar held in Delhi has expressed concern over the multiplicity of almanacs and felt that the implementation of the National Saka calendar could not fulfil the requirements;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

d) whether it is a fact that the multiplicity of various Indian almanacs mostly based on gross unauthentic and miscalculations are not in line with astronimical parametres;

(e) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto; and

(f) the steps Government propose to take to do away with the 'bewildering variety' of Indian Panchangs and to improve the national calendar in tune with the astronomical parametres?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Seminar referred to in the Press Report was held in Calcutta. It expressed concern over multiplicity of almanacs. It was stated at the Seminar that a correct and unified National Saka Calendar came into being in 1957 but is yet to achieve popularity.

(d) and (e) Government is aware that the old practices are still being adopted by some of the almanac makers. However, after the introduction of the Rashtriya Panchang by Government of India in 1957, Almanac makers are increasingly using the authentic data published in the Rashtriya Panchang, the demand for which is on the increase. The Rashtriya Panchang is now published in 13 national languages.

(f) In addition to the Rashtriya Panchang, an Annual Indian Astronomical Ephemeris, containing more detailed data of planetary positions, is being published regularly since 1958. These standardized publications serve as source material for calendaric data for Almanac makers who wish to use correct and authentic data.

The National Calendar (Saka) was evolved after due consideration of the astronomical parametres.

Visit to foreign countries by Scientists and Technocrats for Higher Studies

2493. SHRI KAMAL MORARKA. Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Indian scientists and technocrats allowed to visit foreign countries for higher studies during the last three years;

(b) the number of scientists and technocrats who have adopted foreign nationalities during that period; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to prevent such brain drain?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA): (a) and (b) Some Indian Scientists and Technolocrats do visit foreign countries for higher studies and some of them adopt foreign nationalities. But it has not been possible to maintain a record.

(c) Several steps have been taken from time to time by the Government to prevent such brain drain and also to attract scientists and technocrats settled abroad to return to India. Some of these are:—

— Increase in the outlay for Science and Technology sector in successive Five Year Plans.

— Creation of new scientific Departments/Organisations.

—Setting up of more centres of excellence/advanced studies in Universities and academic institutions.

—Creation of special Cell in the Ministry of Industry for assisting NRI's for setting up industrial units in this country. Some states have also set up special cells and Departments for this.

— Provisions for temporary placement of Scientists and Technocrats under the scheme of Scientists Pool.

— Creation of supernumerary Posts.

—Invitation to distinguished men and women of Indian original settled abroad for short term technical assignments to assist in frontier and emerging areas of Science & Technology.

— Creation of core groups of professionals with necessary modern facilities required for pursuing research in new and frontier areas of science.

— S&T based training for entrepreneurial development.

—Delegation of enhanced administrative and financial powers to S&T institutions to improve working conditions of scientists.

— Provision of facilities for import of equipment for professionals returning from abroad.

— Manpower development training/retraining programmes through associationships / fellowships / courses.

Promotion and marketing of indigenously developed technologies

@2494. SHRI KAMAL MORARKA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have prepared an elaborate plan for promotion and marketing of indigenously developed technologies to compete with imported technology;

(b) if so, what are the details of the plan with areas of application;

(c) whether any time bound action plan has been drawn for its implementation; and

(d) if not, whether the Government propose to implement the plan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA): (a) and (b) The Government has given fullest support to the promotion, development and commercialisation of indigenous technologies to achieve technological self-reliance. Strengthening and diversifying the domestic technology base are necessary to reduce imports and to expand exports in a competitive manner. In order to promote development and marketing of indigenous technology the Government has evolved several incentives. Some of the incentives are: Enhanced Investment Allowance or Accelerated Depreciation on cost of the plant and machinery installed; Custom Duty Exemption on import of scientific equipment and consumables for R&D; and exemption from price control for indigenously developed drugs.

(c) and (d) The measures for promotion and marketing of indigenously developed technologies are required on a continuous basis. The provisions are reviewed from time to time and suitable modifications introduced. The Department of Scientific and

@Previously Unstarred Question 1718 transferred from the 9th March, 1992.